

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUBJECT: **MEDICAL SUPPORT DURING  
TACTICAL OPERATIONS**

EMT, PARAMEDIC, MICN, PHYSICIAN  
REFERENCE NO. 840

**PURPOSE:** To provide direction for tactical emergency medical services (TEMS) personnel assigned to a tactical team by an agency that is conducting a preplanned law enforcement incident.

**AUTHORITY:** Health & Safety Code 1797.220, 1797.221, 1798  
California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 3

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST):** The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training develops training standards and evaluates/approves curriculum for basic police officer training programs in California.

**Tactical Medicine Training Program:** A POST-certified and EMSA-approved, specific, operational training program for tactical medicine providers and operators that trains EMS personnel to safely deliver medical care during a law enforcement response.

**Tactical Emergency Medical Services (TEMS) Personnel:** Physicians, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), paramedics or Mobile Intensive Care Nurses (MICNs) trained in tactical medicine who provide medical care during a tactical response utilizing their authorized scope of practice.

**Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD):** Weapons or devices intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a significant number of people through the release of toxic chemicals, a disease organism, or radiation.

**Hot Zone:** The area in which there is a direct and immediate threat.

**Cold Zone:** The area where no significant danger or threat is reasonably anticipated for the provider or patient.

**PRINCIPLES:**

1. Training is a critical role in the ability of TEMS personnel to effectively support law enforcement and contribute to the safe and successful resolution of critical incident responses.
2. These guidelines are not intended to replace existing EMS policies or circumvent the established response of EMS in the local county.
3. While medical support is important at any tactical operation, agencies should carefully consider the risk vs. benefit of adding armed personnel with limited firearms and tactical experience.

EFFECTIVE: 3-30-11

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REVISED:

SUPERSEDES:

APPROVED:

  
Director, EMS Agency

  
Medical Director, EMS Agency

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4. A primary objective of TEMS is to provide the medical treatment of victims outside of the hot zone. Ideally, patient care should be provided in the cold zone.
  5. The TEMS provider agency should participate in the pre-planning of incident management.
  6. EMS personnel who operate in the cold zone should receive an orientation to TEMS operations.

POLICY:

I. Certification

- A. Paramedics and MICNs that are a member of a TEMS team shall be employed, on duty and sponsored by an approved Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider.
  1. Paramedics shall be licensed by the State and accredited in Los Angeles County.
  2. MICNs shall have a current California license as a Registered Nurse and a current Los Angeles County MICN certification.
- B. EMTs shall be certified by the State and have successfully completed the Los Angeles County local scope of practice.

II. Training

- A. TEMS personnel who operate within a hot zone shall be trained, at minimum, through a POST-certified and EMSA-approved or equivalent tactical medicine training program. The training hour requirements as outlined in POST/EMSA Recommendations are:
  1. Non-law enforcement TEMS personnel
    - a. An 80-hour minimum course which includes didactic and skills training, tactical weapons operations, medical scenarios and includes final written, skills and tactical medical scenario examinations.
  2. Law Enforcement TEMS personnel
    - a. Must be pre-qualified by successful completion of a POST-approved Basic Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) course and an approved WMD training including medical care for WMD.
    - b. A 40-hour minimum course which includes didactic and skills training, medical scenarios and includes final written, skills and tactical medical scenario examinations.

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III. Deployment

- B. TEMS personnel should be familiar with the location of the nearest medical centers, paramedic base hospitals and specialty centers such as trauma, pediatric trauma centers, etc.
- B. When responding to jurisdictions outside of Los Angeles County, TEMS personnel shall operate within their accredited scope of practice.

CROSS REFERENCES:

Prehospital Care Policy Manual:

Ref. No. 502, **Patient Destination**

Ref. No. 506, **Trauma Triage**

Ref. No. 802, **EMT Scope of Practice**

Ref. No. 802.1 **EMT Scope of Practice, Table Format**

Ref. No. 803, **Los Angeles County Paramedic Scope of Practice**

Ref. No. 803.1, **Los Angeles County Paramedic Scope of Practice, Table Format**

Ref. No. 1006, **Paramedic Accreditation**

Ref. No. 1010, **Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) Certification/Recertification**

California Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) in collaboration with the Emergency Medical Services Authority, *Tactical Medicine, Operational Programs and Standardized Training Recommendations*, July 2009.